

Re Item V.

- 1 Reference is made to the following documents:
D1 : WO 02/058611 A (THE PROCTER & GAMBLE COMPANY; OHBA, CHIE) 1 August 2002 (2002-08-01)
D2 : EP 0 104 039 A (SMITH AND NEPHEW ASSOCIATED COMPANIES P.L.C) 28 March 1984 (1984-03-28)
D3 : PATENT ABSTRACTS OF JAPAN vol. 2003, no. 05, 12 May 2003 (2003-05-12) & JP 2003 010243 A (KANEKO TORU), 14 January 2003 (2003-01-14) cited in the application
- 2 INDEPENDENT CLAIM 1
- 2.1 The present application does not meet the criteria of Article 33(1) PCT, because the subject-matter of claim 1 is not new in the sense of Article 33(2) PCT.
Document D1 discloses A sanitary product for insertion into a human vagina, the product comprising an internally worn absorbent plug (26) and an externally worn absorbent pad (30), wherein the pad has a line of weakness (page 17 lines 19-25) about which it is disposed to fold in use.
- 3 DEPENDENT CLAIMS 2-7, 22-27
Dependent claims 2-7, 22-27 do not contain any features which, in combination with the features of any claim to which they refer, meet the requirements of the PCT in respect of novelty and/or inventive step (Article 33(2) and (3) PCT).
- 4 DEPENDENT CLAIMS 8-21
The combination of the features of dependent claims 8-21 are neither known from, nor rendered obvious by, the available prior art.
- 5 INDEPENDENT CLAIM 28

5.1 Document D1, which is considered to represent the most relevant state of the art. From this, the subject-matter of independent claim 28 differs in that: the plug and the pad are two separate members joined together.

5.1.1 The subject-matter of claim 28 is therefore novel (Article 33(2) PCT)
The problem to be solved by the present invention may be regarded as an alternative way of manufacturing

5.1.2 The solution to this problem proposed in claim 28 of the present application is considered as involving an inventive step (Article 33(3) PCT) for the following reasons:
A product having plug and a pad joined to each other is known from D2 or D3, the construction and dimensions however of the product of D2 differs in such a way from the product of D1 that it would not be obvious for the person skilled in the art to use the teachings of D1 to later the manufacturing method of D2. Moreover there is no indication in D3 about the fold lines.

Re Item VIII.

The application does not meet the requirements of Article 6 PCT, because claims 1, 28, 29, 30 are not clear.

Although claims 1, 29 and 28,30 have been drafted as separate independent claims, they appear to relate effectively to the same subject-matter and to differ from each other only with regard to the definition of the subject-matter for which protection is sought in respect of the terminology used for the features of that subject-matter. The aforementioned claims therefore lack conciseness and as such do not meet the requirements of Article 6 PCT. **Moreover the scope of protection of claims 29 and 30 is not clearly defined.**

It is clear from the description o that the following **sheath** is essential to the definition of the invention.

Since independent claims 1, 28, 29, 30 do not contain this feature they do not meet the requirement following from Article 6 PCT taken in combination with Rule 6.3(b) PCT that any independent claim must contain all the technical features essential to

**WRITTEN OPINION OF THE
INTERNATIONAL SEARCHING
AUTHORITY (SEPARATE SHEET)**

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the definition of the invention.